

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4605  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NATO 06337

NOFORN

SECDEF FOR ASD(C3I), ASD(ISA)

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: ETEL MARR NATO  
SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL MEETING ON INTEROPERABILITY OF TAC-  
TICAL AREA COMMUNICATIONS, 29 JUNE 1977

REF: (A) STATE 145572, DTG 222335Z JUN 77, (B) USNATO 05444  
DTG 161139Z JUN 77, (C) USNATO 05475 DTG 161911Z JUN 77

SUMMARY: REPRESENTATIVES TO THE TRI-SERVICE GROUP ON COM-  
MUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS EQUIPMENT (TSGCEE) FROM FRANCE,  
GERMANY, NETHERLANDS, UK AND US MET TO DISCUSS SECDEF  
BROWN'S PROPOSAL TO EXPEDITE INTEROPERABILITY OF NATIONAL  
TACTICAL AREA COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS. AFTER AN EXPLANA-  
TION OF THE US PROPOSAL WHICH EMPHASIZED THE US COMMITMENT  
AND STRESSED US FLEXIBILITY IN THE MEANS TO EXPEDITE INTER-  
OPERABILITY, THE REPS PRESENTED THEIR VIEWS. IN TERMS OF  
EUROCOM MOST FELT THE PROBLEM WAS RESTRICTED TO THE US,  
GERMANY, AND FRANCE. FRANCE SUGGESTED THEY WERE TOO FAR  
COMMITTED TO RITA AND COULD NOT AFFORD TO CHANGE. THE UK  
SEEMED SINGULARLY OPPOSED TO STUDYING THE US PROPOSAL.  
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HOWEVER, ALL AGREED TO STUDY ALTERNATIVES TO ACHIEVE EAR-  
LIER INTEROPERABILITY IF DIRECTED TO DO SO BY NATIONAL  
LEADERS. ALTHOUGH AGREEMENT TO START WORK IMMEDIATELY WAS  
NOT ACHIEVED, THE MEETING PROVED USEFUL IN ALLOWING NECES-  
SARY EXPLANATIONS AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. ACTION REQUESTED:  
WASHINGTON AGREEMENT TO HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS WITH FRANCE,  
GERMANY, AND THE UK. END SUMMARY.

1. AN INFORMAL MEETING WAS HELD AT USNATO ON 29 JUNE 77 TO PROVIDE FOR EXPLANATION AND DISCUSSION OF SECDEF BROWN'S PROPOSAL TO ACCELERATE INTEROPERABILITY OF TACTICAL AREA COMMUNICATIONS. ATTENDING WERE REPRESENTATIVES FROM FRANCE, GERMANY, NETHERLANDS (THE EUROCOM CHAIRMAN), UK, AND THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF (IS), AS FOLLOWS:

FRANCE: ING. ALBERGE

- CAPITAINE DE VAISSEAU TUTENUIT

GERMANY: A.J. JANSSEN, MOD BONN

- CH. ROSE, MOD BONN

- COL O.F. SPITZ, MOD BONN

- J. RANNINGER, MOD BONN

NL: COL DE BIE

UK: BRIG J.L. AKASS, MOD UK

- W. PERRY (UK NADREP)

US: G. L. SALTON, OSD

- E. D. GREINKE, OSD

- E. GENTRY, USNATO

- J. SOOS, USNATO

- COL S. HARVILL, USNATO

IS: K. MUELLER

- J. SPENCER

2. THE US REP (SALTON) DISCUSSED THE US STATEMENT (PROVIDED BY REF A) AND EMPHASIZED BOTH THE US COMMITMENT TO EXPEDIT-  
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ING INTEROPERABILITY AND THE US FLEXIBILITY IN THE MEANS TO AHCIEVE IT. HE STRESSED THAT THE US IS WILLING, DESPITE THE TIME AND THE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS ALREADY INVESTED, TO MODIFY TRI-TAC EQUIPMENT TO SATISFY NATO SPECIFICATIONS BASED ON EUROCOM STANDARDS TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL. HE SUMMARIZED BY STATING US DESIRES TO USSDRI-SERVICE GROUP ON C-E EQUIPMENT (TSGCEE) TO IDENTIFY ALTERNATIVES TO ACHIEVING EARLIER INTEROPERABILITY AND THEIR COST AND SCHE-  
DULE IMPLICATIONS IN ORDER TO AID NATIONAL POLITICAL LEADERS IN REACHING DECISIONS ON THE MATTER.

3. THE NETHERLANDS REP (DE BIE) QUESTIONED THE STATUS OF A HIGH-LEVEL GROUP MEETING (REFERRED TO BY ASYG LABERGE, REF B). ACTING TSGCEE CHAIRMAN (SPENCER, IS) REVIEWED THE LABERGE PROPOSAL. THE US REP REITERATED THAT BOTH ACTIONS WERE NECESSARY; I.E., THE TSGCEE SHOULD PROVIDE TECHNICAL INPUT TO THE HIGH-LEVEL GROUP MEMBERS TO AID IN THEIR DELI-  
BERATIONS.

4. THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT THE TSGCEE COULD TAKE ACTION ON THE US PROPOSAL WITHOUT DIRECTION FROM NATIONAL LEADERS CAME UP IN VARIOUS CONTEXTS. THE IS (MUELLER),

FRG (JANSSEN) AND UK (AKASS) RAISED THE PROCEDURAL POINT THAT THE MINISTERS HAD REFERRED THE ISSUE TO THE DPC IN PERMANENT SESSION BUT THAT THE DPC HAS NOT YET FURTHER ASSIGNED ACTION. UK NADREP (PERRY) SUGGESTED THAT UK AUTHORITIES ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT EVEN EXAMINATION OF THE PROPOSAL IS COST-EFFECTIVE. THE FR REP EXPRESSED A SIMILAR VIEW CONCERNING THE COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF THE RESULTS OF DISRUPTIONS TO CURRENT NATIONAL PROGRAMS. THE FRG (SPITZ) SUMMARIZED THE FEELING THAT WITHOUT POLITICAL SUPPORT BY EACH NATION (WHICH ONLY THE US HAS), ANY EFFORTS BY A SUB-GROUP TO EXAMINE THE ISSUE WOULD FAIL. THE US REP COUNTER-

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ED BY STRESSING THAT IT WOULD BE WRONG TO PRE-JUDGE RESULTS AT THIS TIME, THAT THIS TYPE OF ACTIVITY WAS CLEARLY WITHIN THE TOR AND COMPETENCE OF THE TSGCEE, AND THAT AT THE VERY LEAST, THE TSGCEE WHEN ESTABLISHING A SUB-GROUP TO WORK ON TACTICAL AREA COMMUNICATIONS COULD ESTABLISH A CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR THE SUB-GROUP IN THE EVENT THAT THE NATIONAL LEADERS CONCERNED DIRECTED THE TSGCEE TO EXAMINE THE US PROPOSAL. ALL AGREED THIS WAS REASONABLE.

5. THE QUESTION OF AN AD HOC STANDING GROUP WAS RAISED BY THE IS. THE UK REP REMINDED THE PARTICIPANTS THAT ONLY THE US HAD RESIDENTS IN BRUSSELS COMPETENT TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUE. NO OTHER NATIONAL DELEGATIONS HAD SUCH RESIDENT EXPERTS, AND WOULD BE FORCED TO PROVIDE RESOURCES FROM THEIR CAPITALS. THE US REP ACKNOWLEDGED THE MANPOWER SITUATION. HE ADDED THAT THE FUNDAMENTAL POINT WAS TO BEGIN WORK ON THE US PROPOSAL AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE WITH THE HOPE OF PROVIDING RESULTS TO THE TSGCEE IN SEPTEMBER, TO

THE CNAD IN OCTOBER, AND TO THE MINISTERS IN DECEMBER. FYI. SUBSEQUENT TO THIS MEETING THE TSGCEE SCHEDULED ITS NEXT MEETING FOR NOVEMBER. END FYI.

6. THE FRENCH AND UK REPS EXPRESSED THE VIEWS THAT NATIONAL CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMITMENTS WERE WELL ALONG, AND THAT NATIONS COULD NOT KEEP CHANGING COURSE IN RESPONSE TO CRASH INITIATIVES. THE FRENCH REP MADE REFERENCE TO PAST ATTEMPTS BY FRANCE TO ALTER RITA TO MEET MALLARD AND NATO REQUIREMENTS, THAT THE RITA SYSTEM WHICH WAS NOW IN PRODUCTION HAD ALREADY COST 150 MILLION FRANCS AND THAT TO CHANGE NOW TO SATISFY NEW NATO REQUIREMENTS WOULD COST AN ADDITIONAL 150 MILLION FRANCS WHICH FRANCE COULD NOT AFFORD. THE NETHERLANDS AND UK REPS COMMENTED THAT MANY YEARS OF EFFORT HAD GONE INTO CREATING THE EUROCOM SPECS INCLUDING LONG EFFORTS WITH THE US TO RESOLVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EUROCOM SPECS AND THE US TRI-TAC SPECS, AND EXPRESSED THEIR VIEW THAT "ONE CANNOT KEEP GOING OVER THE SAME GROUND."

7. THE NETHERLANDS REP (WHO IS ALSO CHAIRMAN OF EUROCOM) EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT AS A RESULT OF EUROCOM EFFORTS, NATO WAS IN A BETTER INTEROPERABILITY POSITION TODAY THAN EVER BEFORE. IN HIS VIEW ONLY THE US, FRG, AND FR (ALSO BELGIUM) HAD A PROBLEM. HE FELT THAT DIRECTION BY THE RESPECTIVE NATIONAL AUTHORITIES OF THE FRG AND THE US TO ACCELERATE INTRODUCTION OF EQUIPMENT COMPATIBLE WITH EUROCOM STANDARDS WAS ALL THAT WAS NECESSARY TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEM. ITALY, NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, TURKEY, AND THE UK HAD NO PROBLEM. THE DIFFICULT PROBLEM FOR WHICH HE KNEW NO SOLUTION WAS THAT OF FRANCE (AGAIN BELGIUM IS INCLUDED). THE FRENCH REP DID NOT COMMENT.

8. THE NETHERLANDS REP ALSO ADDED HIS VIEW THAT THE US REFERENCE TO NICSMA CREATED A PROBLEM AND WAS UNNECESSARY. FYI. THIS SUPPORTS VIEWS OF OTHER NATIONS WHO QUESTION THE ABILITY OF NICSMA TO UNDERTAKE EFFORTS BEYOND THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES THEY NOW HAVE. END FYI.

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9. THE MEETING CONCLUDED ON A NOTE OF COOPERATION, I.E., THAT THE TSGCEE MEMBERS CONCERNED WOULD PARTICIPATE IN STUDYING THE SECDEF PROPOSAL WHEN DIRECTED TO DO SO BY THEIR NATIONAL AUTHORITIES. COMMENT. NONE OF THE ALLIED

REPS PRESENT CONSTRUED THE MINISTERIAL DECISION ALONE AS  
CONSTITUTING THIS DIRECTION. END COMMENT.

10. IN SUMMARY, WE VIEW THE POSITIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTE  
SOMEWHAT NON-COMMITTAL AT THIS TIMNE. THE FRENCH IMPLIED  
THAT THEY ARE TOO COMMITTED TO CHANGE RITA, BUT SEEMED  
WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN ASSESSING ALTERNATIVES TO ACHIEVE  
THE US OBJECTIVE. THE UK APPEARS COMPLETELY OPPOSED TO THE  
PROPOSAL, QUESTIONS ITS UTILITY, AND CITES EFFORTS ALREADY  
COMPLETED BY EUROCOM. THE GERMAN POSITION SEEMS TO BE A  
WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE, BUT THEY APPARENTLY DO NOT WANT  
TO TAKE A LEADING ROLE. THE DUTCH SEEMED AMBILVLENT. WE  
SUGGEST THAT THESE UK, FRENCH, AND GERMAN POSITIONS BE AD-  
DRESSED IN A HIGH LEVEL MEETING SUCH AS WE PREVIOUSLY SUG-  
GESTED IN REF C. BY SEPARATE MESSAGE WE ARE RECOMMENDING  
EARLY ACTION BY THE DPC IN PERMANENT SESSION TO TASK THE  
CNAD TO EXAMINE THE US PROPOSAL.

11. ACTION REQUESTED. WASHINGTON AGREE TO APPROPRIATE HIGH  
LEVEL MEETINGS WITH FRANCE, GERMANY, AND THE UK.BENNETT

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